

where a considerable number of patients were to be accommodated. This information was derived from officers of long experience in the care and management of these public establishments, eminently qualified to decide such a question.

The following were stated to be the leading practical and economical advantages of a building of three stories over a building of two stories in height, to accommodate any number of patients exceeding four hundred.

That it will contain a superior accommodation in one-third less space or superficial area:—that the management of the asylums will be more convenient and easy from the decreased distance to be traversed by the officers:—that the classification of the patients can be more effectually carried out:—that the upper stories afford a more cheerful and airy habitation to the best classes, whose happiness is increased by an entire separation from the worst classes, the dirty and the noisy, for whom there is ample room on the ground-floor:—that many aged and infirm patients who are incapable of leaving the galleries, and whom it would be inconsiderate to place on the same floor with the worst classes, would be beneficially and cheerfully placed on the upper-floor:—that the upper-floor would tend to the health of the patients, by their being removed from the damp and effluvia which a ground-floor is incidentally liable to, to a purer and drier air:—that the alleged difficulty of ascending a second staircase is entirely obviated by constructing them with a landing half-story high, and that two-thirds of the whole number of patients being capable of employment, they can readily ascend a second staircase:—that the building would be erected at a considerably less cost, equal to about 16l. per patient.

The late Sir William Ellis, in his treatise on insanity, remarks, that any objection to a three-story building, from its fancied inconvenience to the servants, is perfectly futile; that the plan was found to answer exceedingly well at Wakefield, where he resided for many years; and, as it effects a considerable saving, he had no hesitation in recommending it.

It may, moreover, be observed, that public hospitals of any extent are built three stories in height. With the above-described advantages attendant upon a three-story building, I am of opinion, that the Commissioners in Lunacy, after further practical experience, will eventually relinquish their present predilection for a two-story building.

Although opposed to your own remarks, I rely on your impartiality and desire to arrive at truth, for the insertion of this communication. YOUR SUBSCRIBER.

CHURCH NEEDLE-WORK.

SOME of our readers who desire to work altar-cloths, hassocks, and book-covers, having inquired of us for patterns, we are glad to be able to point their attention to a very excellent "Book of Symbols for Church Needle-work," of which a second edition has recently been published by Mr. Wilks, of 186, Regent-street. It contains twenty-nine sheets of patterns, mostly appropriate in character, simple in design, bold in effect (when worked out to a proper size, according to the canvas employed), and easy of execution. In the practical directions which accompany the designs, it is remarked "that the figures should not be shaded. The most beautiful effects may be produced by the employment of two or three colours only on each pattern; for instance, all the figures in gold colour on rich blue or ruby grounds, the squares being separated or surrounded by a single border." This series of plates being uniform, facility is afforded for the sub-division of labour, as the several parts may be worked by different hands and then joined together. To Mr. Wilks, one of those men of education and fortune, engaged in commercial pursuits, to be found only in England, the credit is due of having first introduced the Berlin work in England, which has led to an enormous trade, and given respectable and lucrative employment (where it is so much needed) to thousands of females.

SCENERY AND DECORATION.

MR. PLANCHÉ's charming Christmas piece at the LYCEUM, displays some of the most beautiful scenery and costumes that we have seen for a long time. An enchanted wood, with groups of shepherds and shepherdesses, improvements on their China resemblances to be found in nice old houses, is one of the most perfect things ever put upon the stage: the arrangement of colours is quite beautiful. With the neatness, elegance, and good taste shown in the piece itself, we are supposed to have nothing to do; or we should speak in warm terms. The first scene in the DRURY LANE pantomime, the sea-shore by moonlight, with mimic ripples, is excellently well managed. Mr. Balfé's new opera has some capital scenery. Gothic architecture is beginning to be better understood by stage artists than it was, and we find more consistency in architectural representations generally. An amusing instance to the contrary was observed in a piece by the late Mr. Peake, called "Gabriel," recently played at the Adelphi Theatre, where an Italian monumental urn, on a pedestal to match, was represented beneath a gothic canopy.

METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

THE second meeting of the Metropolitan Commission of Sewers was held on Thursday, the 23rd ult., at No. 8 Committee-room, House of Commons; the Right Hon. Lord Morpeth, M.P., in the chair. There were present—Lord Ashley, M.P., the Hon. F. Byng, Mr. Walter, M.P., Mr. Bullar, Mr. R. Lambert Jones, Mr. Leslie, Dr. Southwood Smith, Mr. E. Chadwick, Rev. W. White, and Mr. Puckle.

A report was read from the Committee of Accounts on the subject of the custody of the funds of the commission, which stated that they had made arrangements with the Directors of the Union Bank of London for that purpose, they giving a rate of 2 per cent. interest on the monthly minimum balances in their hands, and giving their freehold banking-house, value 30,000l., as a security for the same. The recommendation was unanimously adopted.

A recommendation was next reported from the committee that all officers of the commission should be re-appointed for a quarter of a year, and that all fees and per centages be henceforth abolished. This was adopted.

Lord Morpeth then called upon the surveyors of the commission to make their report on cleansing and flushing, which was as follows:—

"Since the last meeting of the court we have increased the number of men employed in the operation of flushing sewers and cleansing cesspools to upwards of fifty, and now respectfully submit our report on the works performed. In seventeen streets 142 cube yards of deposit have been flushed away from 4,517 feet in length of sewers, in the Westminster division. The depth of deposit varied from 9 inches to 1 foot 6 inches.

"With regard to cesspools, we beg respectfully to offer the following remarks:—The pump which we have caused to be constructed for the removal of deposit from cesspools into the sewers requires only two men to work it, and other two men to attend to the hose and dilution of the deposit. As this pump discharges thirty-two gallons per minute, and after being fixed has emptied a cesspool containing 3 cube yards of deposit, together with the water used for dilution, in less than half an hour, we do not think it advisable to increase its size. A larger pump would require more hands, and as much of the time is occupied in removing the apparatus from one cesspool to another, and adjusting the hose, the proportion of time saved would only be during the time of the pump working, which, on calculating, we find thus:—Small pump, worked by two men, would empty (say) five cesspools, containing 15 cube yards, in the whole nine hours; large pump, worked by four men, would only empty six cesspools, containing 18 cube yards, in the whole nine hours and a half."

"We propose to make a slight alteration in the construction of the pump, by fixing it in the centre of the carriage, instead of at one end, so that both men shall stand in the platform, instead of only one as at present. Sir William Burnett's disinfecting fluid has answered the purpose of destroying the obnoxious effluvia in every instance.

(Signed) "J. ROE,
JOHN PHILLIPS, } Surveyors.

"December 23, 1847."

Mr. Chadwick wished to know whether they could carry on the process of cleansing without the escape of any offensive smell, so that it might be done in the day-time.—Mr. Roe said the whole of their cleansing and flushing had been performed in the

day-time, and although fifty persons were frequently looking on, they never suffered the slightest inconvenience on that account. Very great objection was urged by the owners of houses to the cesspools being emptied at all for fear of the expense; while, on the other hand, the occupiers were very thankful for the relief thus afforded.—Mr. Chadwick hoped they would fully carry out this plan, which for some time had been the mode adopted in Paris, where relief was immediately afforded, and at a very trifling expense.—Lord Morpeth.—What is done with the sewage obtained therefrom?—Mr. Chadwick said in Paris it was conveyed by large barrels to the outskirts of the city, where it was sold; but in London it was discharged into the river Thames, and this subject would form a matter of serious consideration for the committee.

The clerk read a complaint of want of drainage from the inhabitants of Drury-lane, and in reference to it said that the lower part of Drury-lane, below Long Acre, had no sewer at all. Referred to the General Purposes Committee. A letter was received from Mr. Bathurst, one of the late Commissioners of Westminster Sewers, calling upon the court to extend its powers and active operation to the parishes of Hammersmith and Fulham, in compliance with the wish of the united boards of those districts.

Lord Morpeth inquired of the clerk whether this commission had any jurisdiction in this division?—Mr. Hertalet said some doubts formerly existed, but they had been completely set at rest by the new Act, which invested them with full powers for the districts of Hammersmith and Fulham, and several other parishes. Referred to the General Purposes Committee.

A resolution was then proposed and adopted, that all books, contracts, plans, records, &c., of the entire commission for the future shall be deposited at the office in Greek-street.

Lord Morpeth said he was now compelled to retire from the chair, but before doing so he wished to mention that he had had a communication with the Board of Ordnance, in consequence of a conversation they had on their last meeting, requesting to be furnished with an estimate of the survey of the metropolis. He was happy to say that they could see their way very satisfactorily, and that a survey sufficient for all the purposes of the court could be completed at a comparatively very small expense.

Lord Ashley having taken the chair,—

A report was read on the subject of house drainage, which set forth that at present house drains were put down on no regular system,—that a current of foul air frequently passed from them into the houses, and that the walls of houses were exposed to permeation therefrom, causing the most frightful results.

Mr. Chadwick urged upon the court the necessity of looking into this subject, as at present there was no general plan, and it was also incumbent on the court to look at the expense, which should be the minimum, so that it might be as little onerous as possible. He had heard the opinion of many eminent builders, that in numerous instances the expense of laying in drains was mere waste of money, from the absence of any regular system—aggravating the evil by the escape of effluvia into the air, and permeating the sides of houses. In putting in drains they ought to form part of a general system. It was important that all parties should know that from these considerations plans would speedily be brought forward for the benefit of all, and that great improvements and reduction of expenditure were but in their infancy. There was no alternative but that the court should take immediate steps, as many districts were quite ready to adopt their measures as soon as they ascertained they could receive them at a reasonable cost. He concluded by moving that the resolutions proposed by the General Purposes Committee be approved, carried out, and adopted. This was unanimously agreed to.

The Hon. F. Byng wished the court to be in full possession of all facts relating to where the greatest evils from nuisances and want of drainage existed, and therefore moved, "That the clerk do write to the Commissioners of Police, requesting the superintendents of the various divisions to report for the information of the Metropolitan Commissioners of Sewers what localities are in the greatest want of drains, and where the inhabitants are most suffering from the accumulation of offensive matter." Agreed to.

Mr. Walter said he had been informed that, for drainage purposes, a very effectual substitute for the expensive ferro-metallic pipes could be found in Claridge's asphaltum, and moved "That the surveyors do report on the make and cost of Claridge's asphaltum, and any other proposed materials for sewerage purposes." Agreed to.—(In the motion of Mr. Leslie, Mr. Walter was added to the General Purposes Committee.—It was arranged that an office for the reception of applications and rates, for the Surrey and Kent Divisions, should be opened near to the Obelisk, in the Blackfriars'-road.

At a meeting of the commission on the 30th December, in No. 8 Committee-room, House of